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ABSTRACT

Educational needs and interests of seniors and professionals were studied in relation to abuse and mistreatment of older adults in Saskatchewan, Canada. A triangulated approach involved three data collection instruments: telephone questionnaire interviews, focus group meetings, and key informant telephone interviews. Older adults, aged 55 and over, and persons working with seniors in a professional capacity likely to participate in learning events related to senior abuse were identified and invited to participate in the study. The telephone questionnaire involved 30 participants, the 3 focus groups had 30 participants, and key informant telephone interviews had 8 participants. Education was seen as the key to empowerment and prevention. Five topics were rated as extremely important: basic information on senior abuse, caregiving issues, positive images of older adults, support services and counseling, and intervention and protocol development. Among educational tools and methods discussed, audiovisual resources rated the highest. Interactive workshops or training sessions with the instructor on site were seen as valuable. Distance education was seen as more useful for professionals than older adults. Involvement of seniors and peer support were viewed as a helpful educational process. Barriers included time, other commitments, topic, weather conditions, distance, and cost. Recommendations were made to develop programs on elder abuse. (Appendixes contain 21 references and instruments.) (YLB)

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SENIORS' EDUCATION CENTRE

ED 402 446

THE STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF SASKATCHEWAN SENIORS AND PROFESSIONALS IN RELATION TO ABUSE AND MISTREATMENT OF OLDER ADULTS

Seniors' Education Centre
University Extension
University of Regina
Regina, Saskatchewan

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1. INTRODUCTION

Senior abuse and mistreatment is the most underserved form of family violence in terms of training, educational resources, intervention, and direct service programs (One Voice, 1995; Pittaway & Gallagher, 1995; Podnieks & Baillie, 1995). Senior abuse projects in the past have had varied success. Acknowledging and finding solutions for senior abuse is very complex and frustrating. There are no quick remedies. Seniors in abusive situations are likely vulnerable and isolated. If services exist, they often have difficulty accessing those services. Saskatchewan seniors and professionals must provide direction on where to begin addressing this complex issue.

It is such complexities which led the Seniors' Education Centre staff to reassess whether the approach to prevention education in the senior abuse area has been relevant and useful to older adults and professionals. With funding from the Victim's Fund, Saskatchewan Justice, Centre staff implemented the 10 month "Education and Community Development Project for the Prevention of the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older Adults".

The project was based on the philosophy that prevention is key to addressing senior abuse and that prevention is best met through education. It was also believed that education, the creation and sharing of knowledge, would drive the development of intervention and service programs. Finally, the project was based on the belief that it is necessary to combine the skills and resources of both professional service providers and older adults to address senior abuse in the most effective manner.

Research was undertaken to assess the needs and interests of people working the senior abuse, the usefulness of educational and training opportunities related to abuse of older people and future education programming. Older adults (age 55 and over) and professionals were asked to participate in the study.

The following is a description of the history, content, methodology, and results of the educational needs assessment.

2. BACKGROUND

The Seniors' Education Centre's extensive work in the area of senior abuse prevention began in 1989 following the "Focus on Elder Abuse" Workshop. A multi-phased elder abuse prevention project was designed and implemented between 1989 and 1993. Some of the highlights of the project included the following activities and events.

In the initial phase, two educational pamphlets on elder abuse were developed and distributed to over 16,000 individuals and organizations. One pamphlet was directed toward professionals, and the other toward seniors and the public. Thirty-five community volunteers came together in Phase Two in January 1992 for a two-day elder abuse prevention forum. During Phase Three, decentralized workshops were led by teams of seniors and professionals trained in Phase Two. Workshops were held in Regina, Prince Albert, La Ronge, Yorkton, Saskatoon, North Battleford, and Swift Current. In Phase Four, a provincial conference on elder abuse prevention issues entitled "Healing Waters, Healing Ways" was planned and completed.

Throughout Phases Two to Four, a comprehensive educational resource tool for seniors and professionals called the "Elder Abuse Awareness Module" was developed. The module was translated into French during Phase Five. This resource has been widely requested by professionals and seniors across Canada and beyond.

In Phase Six culturally appropriate prevention education materials were developed by northern Aboriginal professionals and older adults. Educational workshops were

held in northern Saskatchewan and a full colour poster and post card titled "Elders Helping" were designed and distributed.

More recently, funding was received from Saskatchewan Justice to undertake a 10 month project entitled the "Education and Community Development Project for the Prevention of the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older Adults". The focus of project activities has been to:

- actively consult with community members from around the province;
- seek out possible working and supportive partnerships;
- identify and formulate a project working group;
- conduct an educational needs assessment;
- begin program and curriculum planning processes.

3. WHAT THE LITERATURE SAYS

The abuse and mistreatment of seniors is an important social problem in Canada. Podnieks (1990) conservatively estimates three to six percent of people aged 65 and over have experienced some form of senior abuse. This indicates a need for prevention and intervention efforts focused in this area. However, work in the area of elder abuse is still in its infancy. As Pittaway and Gallagher (1995) state: "It is only in the last decade that attention has focused on this issue and only recently has it been considered one aspect of family violence" (p. 2). Perhaps a sound starting point is broad-based comprehensive education on senior abuse and neglect.

In a recent publication, *Abuse and Neglect of Older Canadians: Strategies For Change*, published by the Canadian Association on Gerontology, Podnieks & Baillie (1995) write on education issues related to the abuse and mistreatment of older people. They maintain that:

> "The need to develop resource materials, information packages, training programs and professional curricula on this topic is a matter of urgency. Health care and social service professionals of all disciplines should have elder abuse as an ongoing subject for updating through continuing education programs for practitioners, educators and administrators. The training of clergy, counsellors, policemen, legislators, bankers, and lawyers should be a major component in any effort to assist abused older people and their families. Public education should inform lay persons of the scope of elder abuse and its prevention and treatment" (1995, p. 79).

These two authors assert that elder abuse must be addressed on all levels, across generations, beginning with education. Effective prevention and intervention efforts must involve a wide spectrum of the general population with a major focus on older adults and professionals who work with them (Lukawiecki, 1992; One Voice, 1995; Ross & Hoff, 1995; Saskatchewan Social Services, 1995; Podnieks & Baillie, 1995).

Much of the literature maintains that broad-based, collaborative educational initiatives are the most effective prevention intervention strategies against senior abuse (Podnieks & Baillie, 1995; Ross & Hoff, 1995). As Podnieks and Baillie (1995) state, "Education is not only about acquiring information, it is about changing attitudes, behaviours and values" (p. 81). Education functions as the basis of change (Saskatchewan Social Services, 1995). Education has the potential to bring together seniors and professionals to learn about the problem and to work toward cooperative solutions. "Effective community response to abuse and neglect begins with awareness and education, and is strengthened by appropriate services, and legislation and effective enforcement" (Lukawiecki, 1992, p. 18). In essence, education drives, and mutually supports, intervention and service delivery programs for senior abuse.

Older adult input and involvement must be sought when addressing the issue of elder abuse and neglect. According to Podnieks and Baillie (1995) "...older adults are lifelong learners who are able to change themselves, and become agents of change in others..." (p. 81). Seniors are best able to define their needs and have a vested interest in working toward solutions (One Voice, 1994). It is through a grassroots community development model that the needs of their target population can best be

met. Indeed, "Every educational and training program directed toward elder abuse prevention should be elderly-centered" (Podnieks & Baillie, 1995, p. 86).

Professionals from various disciplines also play a pivotal role in the prevention and intervention of seniors abuse (Podnieks & Baillie, 1995). Professionals need to know about the aging process, forms of abuse, detection, ethical issues, racism, ageism, and legal considerations to be able to work with abused older adults and their families (Pittaway & Gallagher, 1995; Ross & Hoff, 1995). Furthermore, an experiential education approach helps to sensitize professionals to their own possible ageist attitudes and behaviours. It may decrease any negative stereotypes and may help prevent senior abuse. Ross and Hoff (1995) contend that:

> "...students could learn about the dynamics and traumatic results of abuse by entering vicariously the lives of mistreated older Canadians. By doing so, they can emphatically capture the realities of abuse from the perspective of abused seniors themselves" (p. 98).

Creative alternatives to traditional education models are needed for both professionals and seniors (Ross & Hoff, 1995). Alternatives could include, for example, support groups and the utilization of all forms of media to target a variety of age groups (One Voice, 1994; Podnieks & Baillie, 1995). By going beyond traditional models of education, the prospects are improved for enabling older adults to increase control over their situations and to improve their quality of life (Ross & Hoff, 1995, p. 96).

The regional diversity in Saskatchewan and Canada must be considered. In Saskatchewan, distinct differences in educational and service delivery needs exist

between rural and urban, northern and southern, First Nations, immigrant, and disabled seniors. Therefore, it is imperative to develop educational programs within the context of diverse clientele of older adults and professionals and root them in the communities they are intended to serve (Lukawiecki, 1992; Pittaway & Gallagher, 1995).

There is widespread consensus that more work is required to adequately address the mistreatment and abuse of older adults. Greater emphasis on research, followed by continual education efforts at the community level, will lead to prevention of the problem and more effective services to intervene and treat senior abuse. The key is education, both formal and informal, using an array of methods and modes of delivery. Attention to the diverse learning needs of older adults, professionals and others who are involved in elder abuse prevention is vital. Finally, older adults must be involved in all levels of the planning, organizing and delivery of educational programs.

The challenge before us, then, is to develop a prevention-focused educational approach which will meet the needs and interests of seniors, professionals and others and which will offer the greatest preventative impact.

4. THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The *Study of the Educational Needs and Interests of Seniors and Professionals in Relation to Abuse and Mistreatment of Older Adults* was developed and implemented as part of a larger project operated by the Seniors' Education Centre, University of Regina Extension. See Appendix I for further information on the entire project. Since the study was only one component of the larger project, time and funds were limited. These limits confined the nature and scope of the research.

As participatory action research, the study was intended to establish whether or not Saskatchewan older adults, and professionals who work with them, support the contention that broad-based educational initiatives are the most effective prevention strategies against senior abuse. Furthermore, the results from the research were to establish the content, process and mode of educational delivery that would be most useful and timely to the target groups.

The study, from here on referred to as the Educational Needs Assessment, was undertaken by the project coordinator with assistance from an older adult volunteer. The research instruments were developed in May and June, 1995. Ethical review and other preparatory work was completed in July and August, 1995. The actual implementation of the study was carried out between September and December, 1995.

4.1 METHODOLOGY

A triangulated approach was used to study the educational needs and interests of seniors and professionals in relation to abuse and mistreatment of older adults. Triangulation involves checking theories with several research instruments and measures.

In this study, triangulation involved three data collection instruments including telephone questionnaire interviews, focus group meetings and key informant telephone interviews. Key informant telephone interviews differed from the telephone questionnaire interviews in that they were open ended discussions with highly knowledgeable individuals in the area of senior abuse.

The rationale for using a triangulated approach was to determine if the variety of data collection methods would yield the same or different results. If the information yielded was similar, one can have confidence in the results. If different results were exposed, the differences must be explained. It was also believed that this approach would be appropriate for applied research to accomplish the following four goals:

1. To identify and access, or develop, senior abuse prevention resource materials.
2. To ensure that prevention education content and processes are timely, necessary and relevant to various organizational and institutional partners throughout the province.
3. To ensure adequate local program interest and support for distance education at the televised receiving sites.
4. To establish a solid basis of support and direction for future educational initiatives.

4.1.1 Research Instruments

Three research instruments were designed by the project coordinator with input from the project working group and other Seniors' Education Centre staff. The three instruments used included:

1. Telephone questionnaire;
2. Focus group questionnaire;
3. Key informant questionnaire.

The instruments were based on suggestions from the literature (One Voice, 1994; Podnieks & Baillie, 1995) and background information and recommendations from previous elder abuse prevention projects operated by the Centre. Feedback from the Ethics Review Committee of Graduate Studies and Research, University of Regina, also helped in shaping the questions.

4.1.2 Subject Selection

Given the limits of time and funding for this research component, the project working group decided that the interviewees would be pre-selected as opposed to doing an extensive random sample survey. Selection criteria were developed to gather a finite number of participants for the three data collection methods. See Appendix II for selection criteria. Older adults, 55 years of age and over, and persons working with seniors in a professional capacity who were likely to participate in learning events related to senior abuse, were identified and invited to participate in the study.

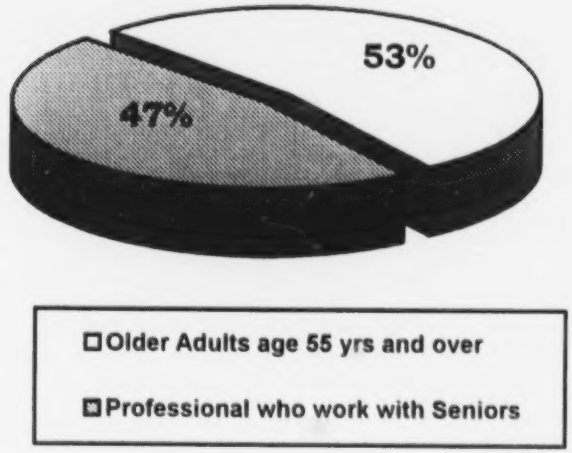
Possible respondents were identified in a project working group meeting where members were asked to submit names of individuals from their communities who fit the selection criteria. In the case of the telephone questionnaire, invitations to participate were made verbally. Potential key informants and focus group members were given a written invitation to participate. See Appendix III for invitation letters. The result was a cross section of older adults and professionals from numerous Saskatchewan communities and beyond. See Graph 1 - "Population Categories, Telephone Questionnaire" and Graph 2 - "Geographical Distribution, Telephone Questionnaire" for more information.

4.1.3 Data Collection

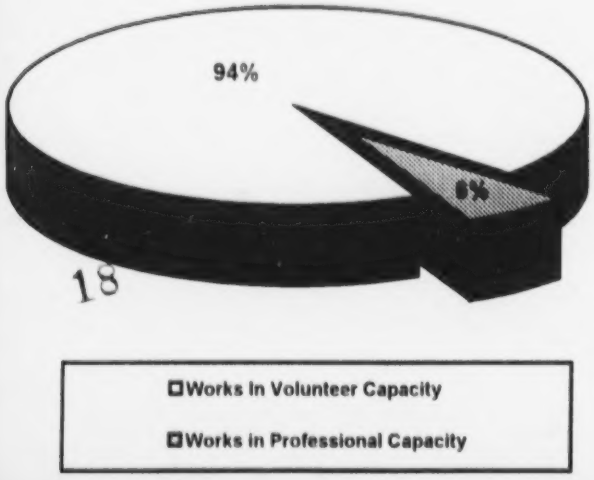
A primarily qualitative approach (with some quantitative measures) was used to collect data in this study. Complementary approaches included:

- Telephone questionnaire (n = 30; 16 older adults and 14 professionals).
- Focus group (n = 3; conducted in 3 different communities. Fifteen older adults and 15 professionals participated).
- Key informant telephone interviews (n = 8; 7 professionals and 1 senior, 2 participants resided outside of Saskatchewan).

Graph 1 - Population Categories
Telephone Questionnaire (n=30)



Older Adults 55+
(n=16)



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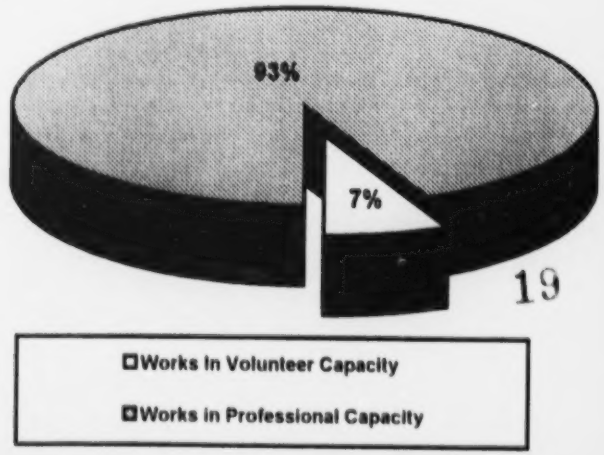
Professionals
(n=14)



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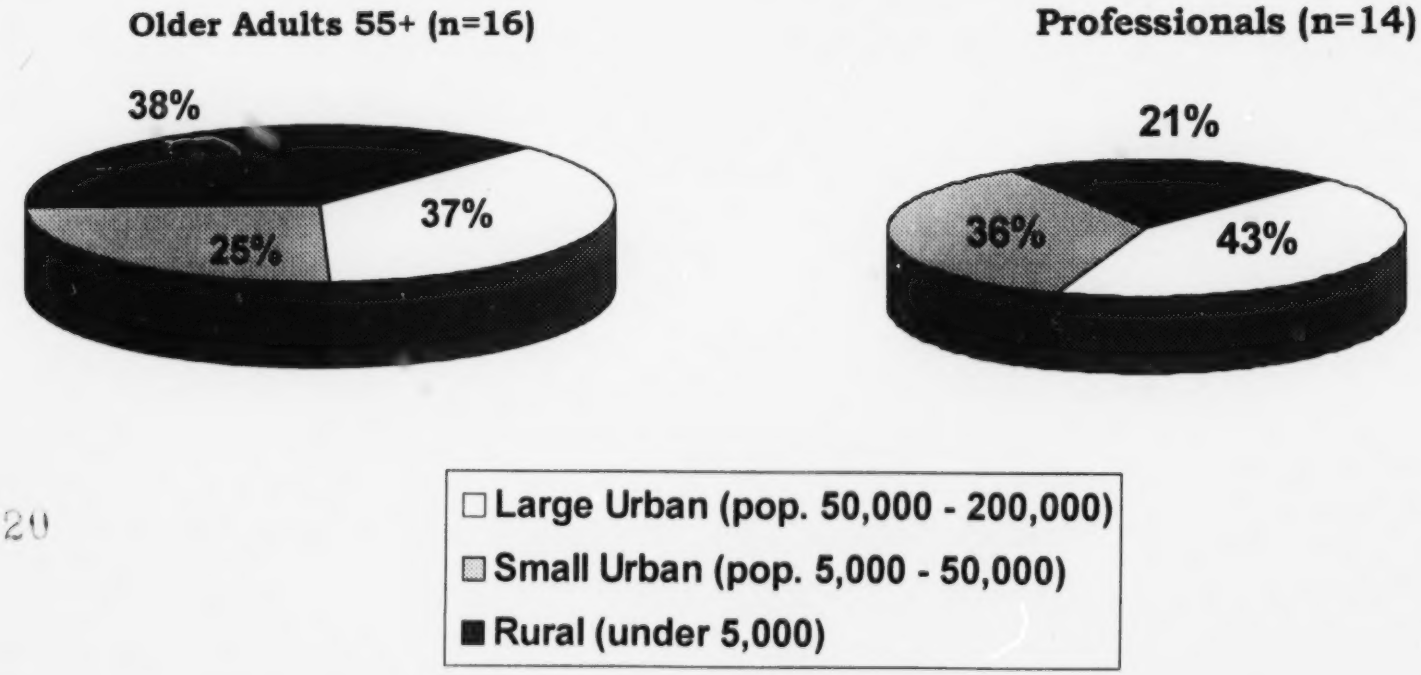
Graph 2 - Geographical Distribution
Telephone Questionnaire (n=30)



Data from older adults ages 55 and older and from human service professionals was gathered for each of the three research instruments. Telephone interviews and face-to-face focus group meetings were held around the province to determine if need, interest and approach would be different for the two target groups and whether it would vary according to geographical location. Equal participation was sought from both the professional and older adult target groups, and from urban and rural settings. Seniors abuse prevention education experts residing outside of Saskatchewan were also consulted.

Prior to data collection, participants were briefly introduced to the project and their role in the study. See Appendix IV for the introduction section to each research instrument. Participants were able to ask clarifying questions in terms of the project, results and future prevention education initiatives.

Verbal consent was obtained in the telephone questionnaire and key informant interviews. Focus group members' consent was obtained through a written consent form (see Appendix IV). Participants received assurance that their responses would be kept confidential and anonymous.

Selected individuals were asked to respond to the research instruments, which were time-limited to approximately 15 minutes (telephone questionnaire), 30 minutes (key informant interviews), and 2 hours (focus group). Additional commitment to the project was not required.

4.1.4 Data Analysis

Responses from subjects to the three research instruments were hand recorded by the project coordinator and an older adult volunteer. Compilation, analysis and reporting of results were completed by the project coordinator.

4.1.5 Limitations

Several limitations exist regarding generalizability and representativeness of results. A random sample was not selected due to time and funding limitations. Therefore, generalizability does not exist due to the sample selection and sample size.

Efforts were made to identify and select individuals who represented a variety of cultural, professional and regional groups. However, the sample of respondents is not representative of the Saskatchewan population. For example, individuals from First Nations, immigrant, and disabled populations are underrepresented in this study. This has implications for future applied research work.

Due to these limitations, the results are not conclusive. They can, however, point to future strategies in terms of prevention education in Saskatchewan.

5. RESULTS OF THE TELEPHONE QUESTIONNAIRE, FOCUS GROUPS AND KEY INFORMANT TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

The three research instruments yielded similar data which leads to confidence in the results and conclusions of this study. The most significant finding is that there is a wide educational need in the area of senior abuse prevention and that education is the key to prevention and effective intervention. Only slight differences were found between the responses of older adults and those representing professional organizations. These difference were seen in choices for educational topics, tools and processes. It is very encouraging to see the interest, concern, ideas, and energy Saskatchewan seniors and professionals express in terms of addressing abuse and mistreatment of older adults.

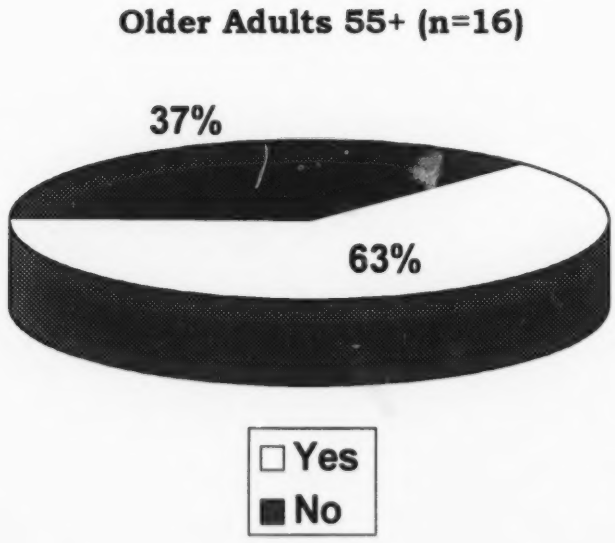
5.1 EMERGING THEMES

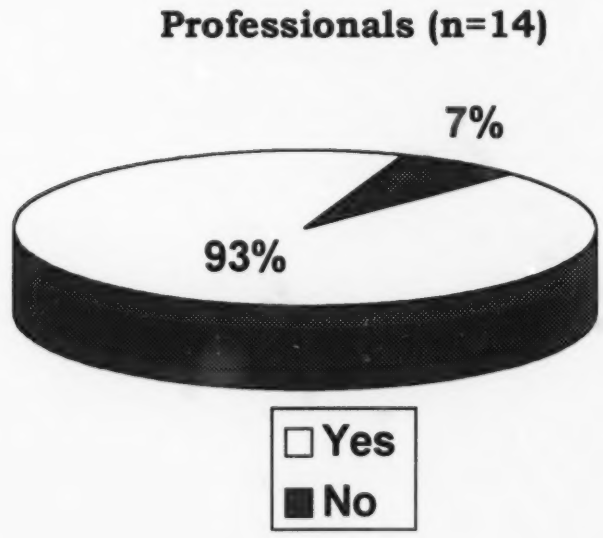
Several strong themes emerged from the needs assessment process which give direction to future prevention education practices and strategies.

5.1.1 Education as the key to empowerment and prevention

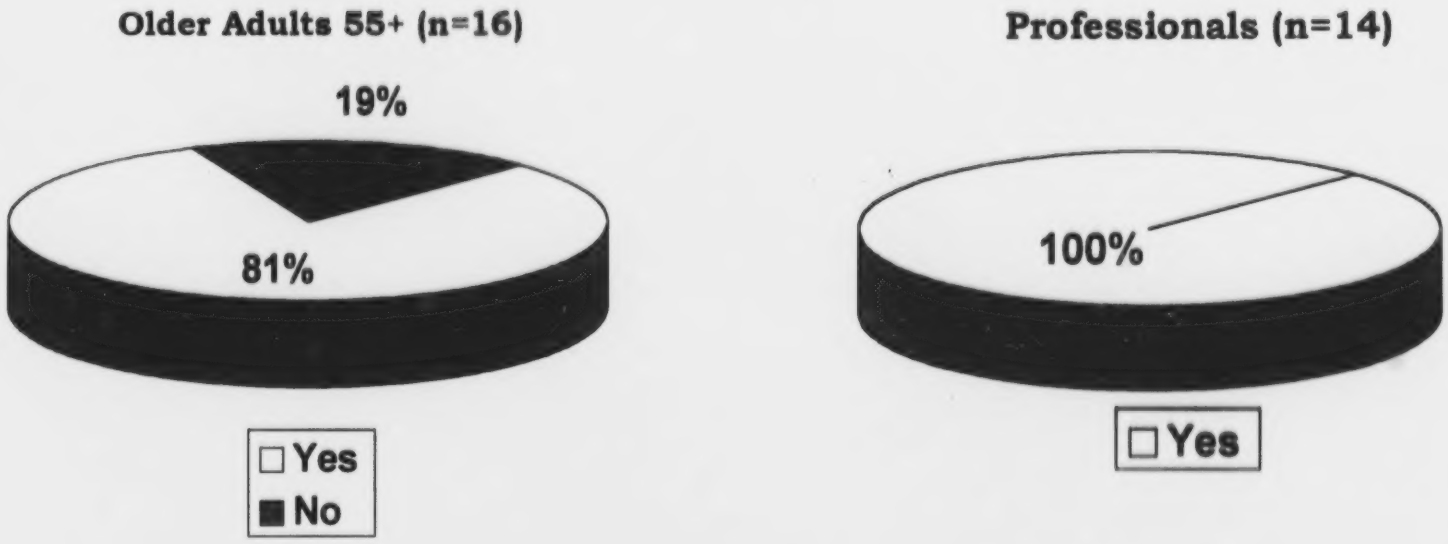
The majority (77%) of telephone questionnaire respondents had been involved in some form (formal or informal) of learning activity related to the prevention of abuse of older people. Despite this high percentage of involvement, 90% of the same respondents were interested in further learning opportunities about the prevention of elder abuse and related topics. See Graphs 3 and 4.

Graph 3 - Previous Learning Experience Related to the Prevention of Senior Abuse
Telephone Questionnaire (n=30)





Graph 4 - Interest in Further Learning Related to the Prevention of Abuse of older Adults and similar Topics Telephone Questionnaire (n=30)



Education was seen as an empowerment process for older adults to decrease isolation and increase independence. Basic information on senior abuse, individual rights and life skills were seen as a means to strengthen older adults, making it less likely they would be vulnerable to abuse.

The need for further education in this area remains great and 100% of telephone questionnaire respondents believed that education of seniors and professionals is a useful way to address the abuse and mistreatment of older people. Furthermore, educational initiatives help to facilitate networking and partnership building between organizations, which 100% of the same respondents felt was necessary in preventing abuse. See Graph 5.

5.1.2 Educational topics, tools, and process

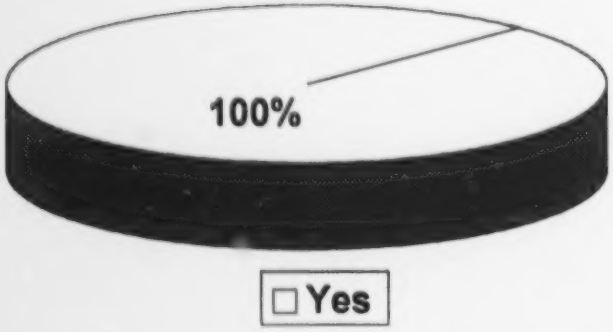
5.1.2.1 Topics

All the topics presented during the telephone questionnaire were of interest to respondents; however, several topics received higher ratings. The top five topics rated as "extremely important" in the telephone questionnaire (n=30) are as follows:

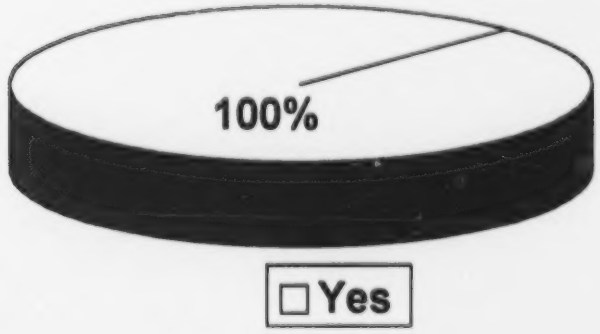
1. Basic information on senior abuse including what it is and how to recognize it.
2. Caregiving issues.
3. Positive images of older adults.
4. Support services and counselling.
5. Intervention and protocol development.

Graph 5 - Interest in Education of Older Adults and Professionals, and Building of Partnerships as Effective Stategies in Preventing Abuse Telephone Questionnaire (n=30)

Older Adults 55+ (n=16)



Professionals (n=14)



The majority of older adult respondents (81% in telephone questionnaire) believed basic information on senior abuse would be most helpful. Respondents said they know what constitutes abuse, how to recognize it and how to take the first steps in the helping process.

The professionals interviewed said they required more specific information on effective intervention approaches. Ability to assess the uniqueness of each individual case and to apply a case specific intervention plan was seen as paramount.

Positive images of older adults

Despite the fact that positive images rated third in preferences for educational topics, the concept of working to eradicate ageist attitudes was stated as a priority by most interviewees. As a primary prevention strategy, a positive image of older adults campaign would teach people to value older adults and would help to address the root causes of senior abuse. This is the vital first step in preventing abuse and mistreatment of the elderly.

See Graph 6 - "Prevention Education Topics Most Needed, Telephone Questionnaire".

Graph 6 Prevention Education Topics Most Needed
Telephone Questionnaire (n=30)

5.1.2.2 Tools

Among all the educational tools and methods discussed, audio visual resources rated the highest in the telephone questionnaire (60% of all respondents) and was discussed most frequently in the other two research instruments. Video resources, in particular, were seen as able to attract an audience of older adults because of their entertainment value. Respondents mentioned that videos are easy to transport and access, and are highly valuable to professionals offering their own training courses.

Because of their interactive nature, workshops or training sessions with the instructor on site were seen as valuable. Many respondents mentioned that face-to-face instruction is the best option. Distance education technology and print resources rated third and fourth respectively.

Other notable suggestions for educational mediums included:

- newspapers;
- radio;
- television (broadcast channels or community channels);
- drama vignettes.

These were all seen as having a large target population. They would be appealing and non-threatening to older adults at risk.

Distance education as a tool

Study participants offered concern and support for using distance education technology in senior abuse prevention education. There was general consensus

from respondents in all three data collection methods that distance education is more useful for professionals than older adults. The technology seems to be too removed and impersonal for seniors. Problems of visual and auditory quality can inhibit learning.

On the other hand, there was support for distance education as a tool to create greater access to educational resources for individuals residing in rural, northern and remote locations of the province. Many respondents also commented on its cost effectiveness and appeal in terms of reduced travel time, distance and cost.

Those interviewed thought that the effectiveness of distance education technology could be increased if the following criteria were met:

- Community orientated site facilitator. A peer would be helpful where a large number of older adults were participating.

- Interactive and experiential components.

- Emphasis on, and opportunity for, socializing and informal networking.

- Minimal fee.

Even though most interviewees commented that distance education technology is not as effective as face-to-face instruction, 83% of those involved in the

distance education event. Since little has been done in the area of distance education and senior abuse prevention, it is difficult to assess whether or not it is an appropriate educational mode for older adults and the professionals who work with them.

See Graph 7 and Graph 8.

5.1.2.3 Process

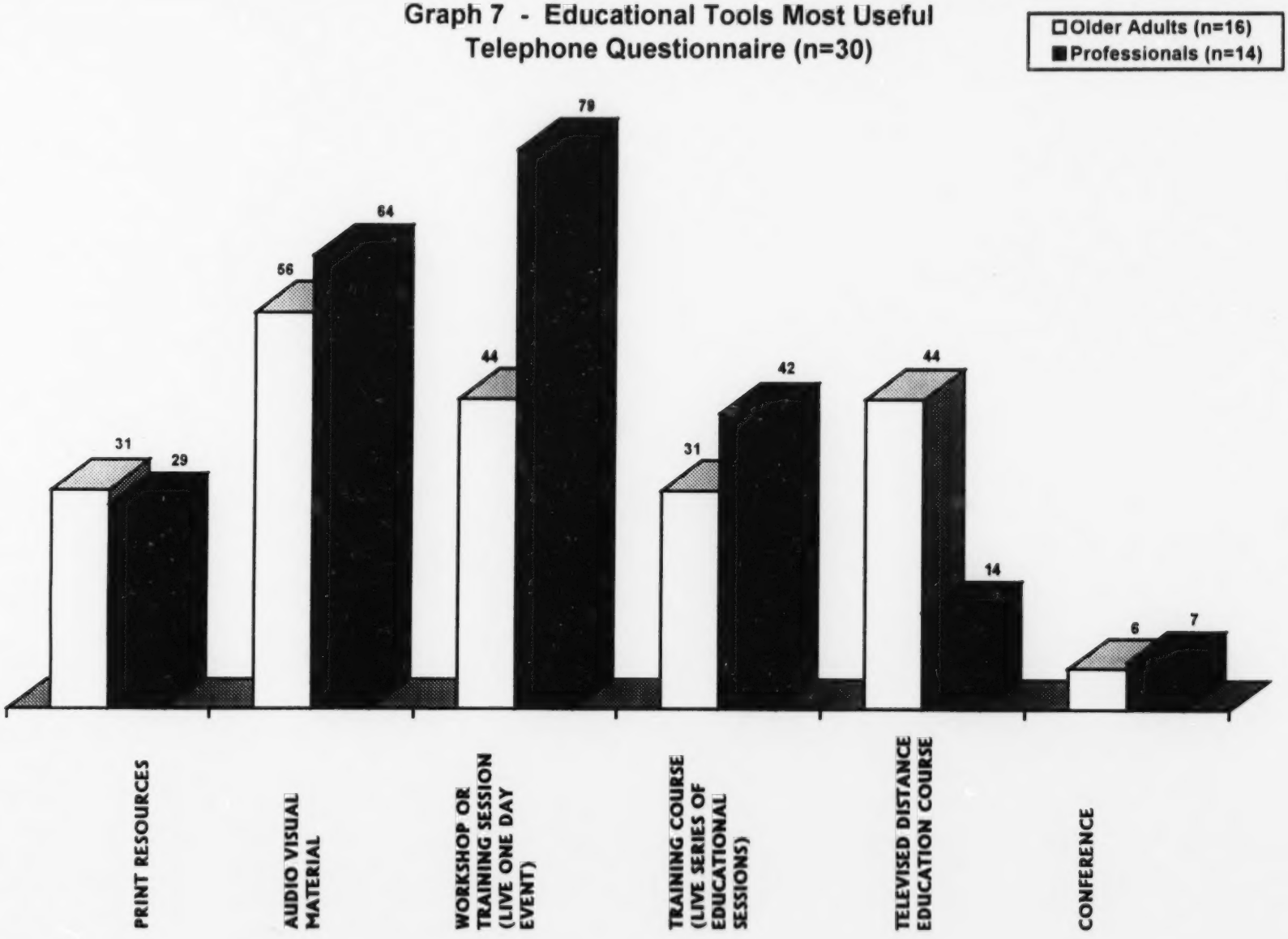
The topic of senior abuse involves emotions, beliefs and opinions. Prevention education should aim to help individuals become aware of their own beliefs and feelings. Appropriate process is extremely important as part of effective education.

A large number of respondents commented on the need for educational programming to be interactive and experiential. Small group activities and other experiential exercises may increase sensitivity around issues of aging and senior abuse and may help in prevention efforts. Respondents commented that interaction, sharing and group work is particularly important in the learning process when using distance education technology.

5.1.3 Peer support

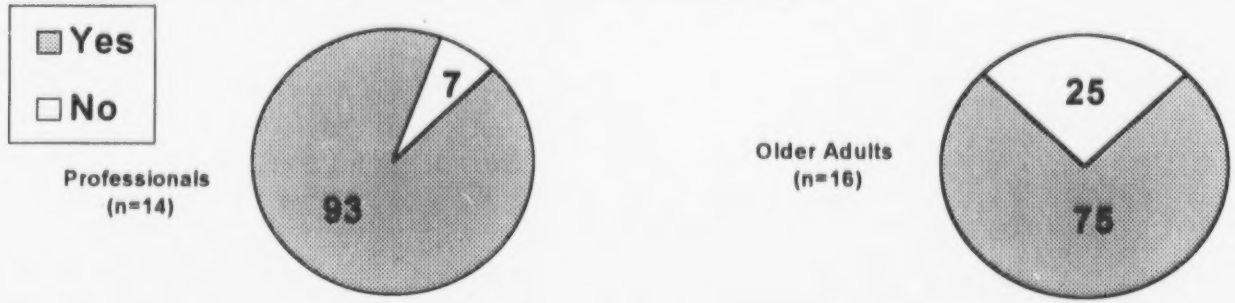
Involvement of seniors, and peer support in particular, was viewed as a helpful educational process in addressing elder abuse. The primary benefit of a peer support model is that it is informal and non-threatening. Older adult peers are more likely to

Graph 7 - Educational Tools Most Useful
Telephone Questionnaire (n=30)

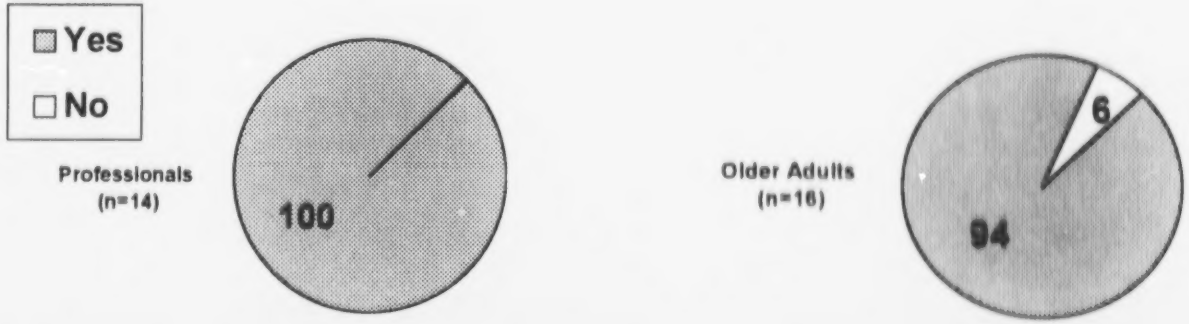


Graph 8 - Possible Educational Participation Rates of Respondents Telephone Questionnaire (n=30)

For A Televised Distance Education Learning Event



For Another Type Of Learning Event (workshop, speaker, etc.)



develop a relationship of trust with someone at risk and, therefore, facilitate the helping process. Training of trainers or a senior peer support program were seen as helpful preventative education.

5.1.4 Grassroots community development

Research participants believed that any educational program development must be embedded in a community development framework. This framework would involve significant local input and involvement from the community. It would be senior-driven and senior-centred. This was seen as vital in empowering older adults and creating community ownership.

The community development approach also addresses the uniqueness of each Saskatchewan community. By helping communities take the lead, local knowledge and resources are used to strengthen and enhance the educational process.

5.1.5 Barriers to learning

Whether it is face-to-face instruction or televised distance education, potential barriers to participation in educational events exist for both professionals and older adults. Respondents commented on several obstacles which would likely prevent them from participating in senior abuse prevention education events.

The barriers mentioned were:

- time (of day, of year, and work and volunteer schedule);
- other commitments;
- topic (should be innovative and new);
- weather conditions;
- distance;
- cost;
- promotion of learning event (the use of less intimidating terms to interest older people).

5.1.6 Other

Other notable ideas which emerged are:

- There is the ongoing question of how to involve older adults from all cultural groups. How can their unique educational and cultural needs be met?.

- A community outreach model, where educators reach out to small groups of people to offer information on senior abuse, may be very effective. Examples of groups could be senior centres, church groups, community interest groups, etc.

- Professionals would greatly benefit from educational opportunities offered in their workplaces as part of their professional continuing education.

6. CONCLUSION

The educational needs assessment completed during the "Education and Community Development Project for the Prevention of Abuse and Mistreatment of Older Adults" has been an invaluable process for identifying innovative educational and prevention strategies. Seniors' Education Centre staff and volunteers want to take action on some of the ideas and to make related changes in elder abuse prevention education resources and processes.

Seniors' Education Centre staff are currently producing a broadcast quality resource video on abuse and mistreatment of older adults. The video will serve as an exceptional resource for professionals and seniors involved in awareness-raising and training.

With recently approved funding from New Horizons, Health Canada, the Centre will also design and offer a pilot televised distance education program. The program will be planned by a community working group of individuals from across Saskatchewan. The program will air in about six Saskatchewan communities and will involve senior abuse prevention and intervention learning resources. As a pilot program, much will be learned about using this educational medium with older adults.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop a broad-based educational strategy which offers basic information on senior abuse and skill development to empower older adults and prevent senior abuse.

2. Offer basic information on senior abuse to older adults and creative ideas for intervention and protocol development to professionals.

3. Develop and implement a positive images of older adults campaign to eradicate ageist attitudes and work towards preventing senior abuse.

4. Develop educational tools which have a large target audience, such as:
   - video resources on senior abuse;
   - newspaper articles;
   - radio programs;
   - T.V. (broadcast or community channels);
   - drama vignettes

5. Continue to offer interactive workshops or training sessions and print resources in senior abuse prevention education.

6. Use televised distance education to create greater access to learning opportunities for older adults residing in rural and remote areas.

7. Ensure the effectiveness of distance education as a learning tool by meeting the following conditions:
   - Community-orientated site facilitator;
   - Interactive and experiential components;
   - Opportunity for socializing and informal networking;
   - Minimal fee.

8. Include interactive and experiential learning components in prevention education initiatives.

9. Develop training of trainers or senior peer support programs. Peer support is non-threatening and likely to facilitate the helping process more readily.

10. Include significant local input and community participation in educational program development.

11. Be aware of potential barriers to learning, as well as to alternative and creative ways to educate.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE AND MISTREATMENT OF OLDER ADULTS

SPONSORING ORGANIZATION

The Seniors' Education Centre, University Extension, University of Regina

Since 1977, the Seniors' University Group (SUG) Inc., a volunteer membership-based organization, has worked in partnership with University Extension staff at the University of Regina. The derivative of this partnership is the Seniors' Education Centre (SEC).

The purpose of the Centre is two-fold:

1. To provide in Regina, by means of the Seniors' University Group Inc., educational and stimulating learning opportunities for, and with, older adults.

2. To extend and facilitate throughout the province, via University Extension staff, older adult educational opportunities and related applied research.

Main Activities of the Centre

The SEC, through approximately 100 volunteers and SEC (University Extension) staff, offers more than 125 non-credit courses each year with nearly 2,500 registrants in about a dozen southern Saskatchewan communities. Courses, which are identified by the older adults, range from history to economics, languages to literature, computer programming to yoga, religion to art, etc.

SEC staff, in partnership with SUG volunteers, also facilitate applied research and outreach projects including the Lives of Older Women Video series, the Cross Cultural Intergenerational Project, the Older Aboriginal Adults Learning Needs Assessment, older adult rural education programs, the Saskatchewan Older Adult Literacy Project, and Seniors Serving Seniors: Volunteers Promoting Healthy Aging Project.

BACKGROUND

In addition to numerous and varied outreach projects which operate with significant input from Saskatchewan older adults, the SEC has also, in the past, developed learning and networking opportunities via several elder abuse prevention initiatives.

The Centre's extensive work in the area of elder abuse prevention began in 1989 following the "Focus on Elder Abuse" Workshop which examined possible avenues for addressing related issues in Saskatchewan. One of the workshop recommendations was that the Centre provide increased public education on elder abuse, on both a local and regional basis, to the general public, to seniors, and to professionals. A multi-phased project, spanning four years (1989 - 1993), was designed and implemented.

The goals of the Elder Abuse Prevention Project were to:

1. Increase sensitivity and awareness of elder abuse issues and resources;

2. Help create resource networks.

3. Develop partnerships between seniors and professionals.

4. Foster local helping networks for intervention and prevention. Some of the highlights of the project included the following activities and events.

In the initial phase, two educational pamphlets on elder abuse were developed and distributed to over 16,000 individuals and organizations. One pamphlet was directed toward professionals; the other toward seniors and the public. Phase Two brought 35 community volunteers together in January 1992 for an elder abuse prevention two-day training of trainers forum. During Phase Three, decentralized workshops were led by these trained teams of seniors and professionals in seven communities throughout the province. These communities were Regina, Prince Albert, La Ronge, Yorkton, Saskatoon, North Battleford, and Swift Current. Phase Four involved developing and implementing a provincial conference on elder abuse prevention issues entitled "Healing Waters, Healing Ways". Throughout Phases Two to Four, an extensive educational resource tool for seniors and professionals called the "Elder Abuse Awareness Module" was developed. The module was translated into French during Phase Five. This resource has been widely requested by professionals and seniors across the nation and beyond. The module is presently in its fourth and final printing. Phase Six involved working with northern Aboriginal professionals and older adults to develop culturally appropriate prevention education material.

Educational workshops were held in northern Saskatchewan and a full colour poster and post card titled "Elders Helping" were designed and distributed.

While senior volunteers continued to work on applied research and educational activities related to elder abuse, the significant initiatives begun by the SEC stalled without project funding. Community consultations in October and November of 1994 clarified the need for further educational and community development work in the area of elder abuse prevention in Saskatchewan. A project entitled "Education and Community Development Project for the Prevention of Abuse and Mistreatment of Older Adults" was proposed and received funding from the Victim Services Fund, Saskatchewan Justice. Additional funding is currently being sought from the Family Violence Prevention Division, Health Canada.

PROJECT GOALS

1. Foster and develop new and existing provincial partnerships with government, non-governmental agencies, and other organizations and individuals who are working on the prevention of abuse and mistreatment of older adults.

2. Increase community involvement in, and ownership of, education and prevention initiatives.

3. Identify, and possibly work with, Aboriginal and other minority groups such as immigrant older adults and seniors with disabilities.

4. Promote positive images of older adults among youth as a primary prevention strategy.

OBJECTIVES

1. Utilizing a multi-disciplinary, multi-regional approach, engage in ongoing consultation with key community stakeholders for the purpose of determining needs and strategies related to elder abuse education and prevention.

2. Include in a significant way those Saskatchewan individuals, organizations and groups who have been, or are, involved in elder abuse prevention initiatives.

3. Form a provincial project working advisory group to liaise with communities and to assist in shaping the project in ways which will best meet the needs of the respective communities and groups.

4. Offer consultation to, and seek guidance from, First Nations' organizations, immigrant seniors and older adults with disabilities who are developing prevention education programs and strategies.

5. Undertake an educational needs assessment of professionals and older adults to determine possible content and processes desired in prevention education and skill training programs.

6. Possibly develop educational resource materials aimed at elder abuse prevention. Specifically, these may include the production of a "positive imaging of older adults" poster; and the updating and revision of the current Elder Abuse Awareness Module. If time permits, other resources may also be developed as recommended by the project's working group or by community members.

7. Initiate a partnership relationship with Saskatchewan Education, Training and Employment to develop, introduce and incorporate intergenerational program and educational materials to reach children and adolescents with positive examples of the lives and contributions of older adults.

8. Explore the possibility of utilizing distance education (narrowcast and broadcast television) course delivery modes to inform and train older adults and various professional groups throughout Saskatchewan and possibly beyond. The narrowcast television mode will allow participants in over 60 Saskatchewan SCN receiving sites to participate in the project's educational programs and initiatives. Active cooperation with the 9 regional colleges and 4 institutes that support these receiving sites will be sought.

TARGET GROUP

The primary target group of the project will be Saskatchewan older adults; senior organizations; professional groups such as physicians, bankers, nurses, home care workers, police, lawyers, shelter workers, etc.; governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations which hold a significant degree of responsibility and influence in terms of policy and legislation. Government departments could include:

Social Services; Education, Training and Employment; Health and Justice. Non-governmental organizations may include: the Saskatchewan Seniors Mechanism Inc., the Provincial Partnership Committee on Family Violence, the Interhospital Domestic Violence Committee, the Saskatoon Council on Aging, the Aboriginal Women's Council of Saskatchewan, and the Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan. By targeting these groups it is hoped that the project's prevention education and community development efforts will have a significant enough impact in the province to improve the life circumstances of senior victims of abuse and mistreatment.

PLAN OF ACTION AND TIME FRAME

The project was originally designed to be three years in duration. With our current funding we will undertake a scaled down version of the original project plan. The project will begin May 1, 1995 and end February 15, 1996. Project activities can be classified under two headings:

a) partnership building and community development initiatives;

b) educational initiatives.

A) PARTNERSHIP BUILDING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Strategy #1
Actively consult with community members from around the province and seek out possible working and supportive partnerships.

Purposes: To determine provincial needs and strategies for elder abuse prevention and education.

To identify and formulate a project working group and subsequent sub-committees.

To offer consultation to, and seek guidance from, First Nations, immigrants, and special needs groups that are developing prevention education programs and strategies.

To establish working relationships with various government and non-governmental organizations to generate ideas, linkages and resources.

This community development activity will establish a solid base of community support, input and sharing which can be built upon in future initiatives.

B) EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

Strategy #2
Conduct an elder abuse educational needs assessment of professionals and older adults.

Purposes: To ensure the educational content and processes are timely, needed and relevant to various partners throughout the province.

To identify and access or develop multi-disciplinary, multi-regional elder abuse prevention resource materials which can be readily adapted for delivery via the Saskatchewan Communications Network narrowcast and/or cable television broadcasts throughout Saskatchewan and possibly beyond.

To ensure that there is adequate local program support at the receiving sites.

If time and resources permit, additional activities may include the following.

Strategy #3
Determine what portions of the "Elder Abuse Awareness Module" require updating and revising.

Purposes: To identify and access new and innovative elder abuse prevention education programs and resource materials used elsewhere in Canada.

To update and revise the Module to include current and progressive program materials and findings in the elder abuse prevention area.

To ensure the Awareness Module continues to be a high quality and definitive Canadian resource.

Strategy #4
Work with the Saskatchewan Department of Education, Training and Employment to develop and introduce "positive imaging of older adults" curricula resources in Saskatchewan Schools.

Purposes: To combat ageist societal attitudes.

To promote aging as a natural, normal and healthy process.

To promote the skills and wisdom older adults are able to share with younger generations.

EVALUATION PLAN

An interim report with a simple project evaluation will be completed 4-5 months into the project. A summary evaluation and final report will be completed at the end of the project.

APPENDIX II

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR SURVEY, FOCUS GROUP AND KEY INFORMANT PARTICIPANTS

The selection of seniors and professionals will take place by means of a variety of existing Saskatchewan seniors' and human service networks. Participation of seniors, professionals and volunteers will be required in the needs assessment process to determine the interests and resources of a broad spectrum of people interested in senior abuse prevention. Also, it will be imperative to involve Aboriginal, immigrant and disabled older adults in the process. An effort will be made to include equal numbers of older adults and professionals. General criteria for selection of participants will be the following:

FOR OLDER ADULTS

- Representative of the older adult target group for prevention education activities.
- Interested in working toward solutions to senior abuse.
- Has knowledge of, or is interested in becoming involved in, seniors' concerns or needs.

FOR PROFESSIONALS

- Representative of the professional target groups for prevention education activities.
- Interested in working toward solutions to senior abuse.
- Interested in promoting seniors' concerns or needs.
- Involved in seniors' issues ideally, or be interested and willing to become involved.
- Involved in a helping agency in their community.

APPENDIX III

November 2, 1995

Dear :

The staff at the Seniors' Education Centre, University Extension, University of Regina is conducting an educational needs assessment to determine the needs, interests and resources in relation to the prevention of senior abuse (see enclosed project description for further information). We would like your assistance in gathering this information.

We invite you to take part in a 30 minute key informant telephone interview to discuss prevention education initiatives. Attached is a copy of the key informant questionnaire for your review. The interview has been arranged for November 23, 1995 at 1:30 p.m. your time.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at (306) 585-5706.

Sincerely,

Darla Goettler, Project Coordinator
Prevention Education Project (Senior Abuse)

APPENDIX III Continued

November 30, 1995

Dear :

The staff at the Seniors' Education Centre, University Extension, University of Regina is conducting an educational needs assessment to determine the needs, interests and resources in relation to the prevention of senior abuse. We would like your assistance in gathering this information.

We invite you to take part in a 2 hour focus group meeting to discuss prevention education in Saskatchewan. Attached is a copy of the focus group questionnaire for your review. The meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 14, 1995 from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. We will be gathering in Room 115 of the College Building (beside the Seniors' Education Centre, College Ave. and Cornwall St.). A light lunch will be served after the meeting.

Myself or Elsie Feuring, a project volunteer, will be contacting you in the next week to confirm your participation.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at (306) 585-5706.

Sincerely,

Darla Goettler, Project Coordinator
Prevention Education Project (Senior Abuse)

APPENDIX IV

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS TO STUDY THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF SENIORS AND PROFESSIONALS IN RELATION TO ABUSE AND MISTREATMENT OF OLDER ADULTS

1. TELEPHONE NEEDS ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

1a. INTRODUCTION

The University of Regina's Seniors' Education Centre is conducting a needs assessment into the interests and usefulness of educational and training opportunities related to abuse of older people. Today I am phoning seniors (age 55 and over) and professionals to respond to some questions which will help us get a clearer picture of those need and interests.

Your participation in the telephone survey and your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous. The anonymity and confidentiality of the responses will be protected within legally acceptable limits. *(If anyone asks to have the limits defined say "Because we are dealing with the subject of senior abuse I (the interviewer) am obligated to report criminal activity which places an individual in immediate life threatening danger").* General responses will be included in a summary report, however, names and direct quotations will not. Also, while we hope to develop new programs in this area we can not promise you any direct or indirect benefits from participating in this study.

It will take approximately 15 minutes of your time to complete the questionnaire. You are also not obligated to participate in this survey and may withdraw at any time during the questioning. You also have the right to seek further information about this study by contacting the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research at the University of Regina at 585-4161.

Are you willing to take a few moments and participate in this telephone survey?

1b. TELEPHONE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Have you ever been involved in learning events or projects related to the prevention of abuse of older people?

   If yes, what was the learning activity or project?

2. Would you be interested in learning more about the prevention of abuse of older adults and related topics?

3. In your opinion, is education of older adults an useful way to address the abuse and mistreatment of older adults?

4. In your opinion, is education of professionals a useful way to address the abuse and mistreatment of older adults?

5. Do you think building partnerships between organizations and sharing of information and resources would be helpful in preventing abuse?

6. What prevention education topics do you think are most needed? Please rate your preferences as follows:
   5 - Extremely Important, 4 - Important, 3 - Don't Know,
   2 - Not Important, 1 - Extremely Unimportant

   ____ Basic information on abuse and neglect of older people (including physical, emotional, and financial abuse and neglect)
   ____ Social context of senior abuse
   ____ Legal and policies issues
   ____ Caregiving issues
   ____ Intervention and protocol development
   ____ Support services and counselling
   ____ Community resources
   ____ Community development aspects
   ____ Cultural issues in senior abuse
   ____ Empowerment of older adults
   ____ Positive imaging of older adults (positive attitudes and images about seniors and aging)

7. In what form would you find it most useful to receive this information? Please rate your preferences according to the following scale:
5 - Extremely Useful, 4 - Useful, 3 - Sometimes Useful,
2 - Not often useful, 1 - Would not be able to use.

____ Print resources (pamphlets, information sheets, booklets)
____ Audio visual material (audio or video cassettes)
____ Workshop or training session (live one-day event)
____ A training course (live series of educational sessions)
____ Televised distance education course (televised one-day or televised multi session learning events held at various Saskatchewan community receiving sites)
____ Conference
____ Other

8. If a learning event was planned for your area would you volunteer to help organize it?

9. If a televised distance education learning event was held in your area would you participate in it?

If no, what would prevent you from participating?

10. If another kind of learning event (workshop, speaker) was held in you area would you participate in it?

If no, what would prevent you from participating?

11. Do you have any additional comments or recommendations in terms of education prevention activities?

12. Should these learning resources be available in other languages?

13. In which of the following population categories do you belong?

____ Older adult age 55 years and over
____ A volunteer who works with older adults
____ A professional who works with seniors (please state professional/vocational category)

14. Where in Saskatchewan do you reside (Please check one)

____ Major urban (population 50,000 - 200,000)
____ Minor urban (population 5,000 - 50,000)
____ Rural (under 5000)

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this questionnaire

2. FOCUS GROUP

2a. INTRODUCTION

This focus group meeting is being held by the Seniors' Education Centre, University of Regina to assist in determining some of the educational needs and interests of older adults, volunteers, and professionals in relation to senior abuse. As a focus group member you will be asked to respond to the following 5 questions. We will be doing a round where each individual responds to the question. Once everyone has had an opportunity to voice their thoughts, the group as a whole will be allowed to discuss and make comments. We will use this process for each of the 5 questions. Additional time will be given at the completion of the questions for general discussion. The information you offer will be summarized into a report but at all times the anonymity of responses will be maintained. Consent to participate will be attained by reading and signing the supplied consent form (attached). Our focus group meeting is limited to 2 hours.

2b. FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. If an education/training program was offered in your area what type of information would you like to receive (e.g. legal and policy issues, intervention and protocol development, empowerment of older adults, etc.) and why is it important for you to receive this information?

2. What would be your preferred way to receive the information? (For example, would you like to participate in a workshop, a conference, receive written information, view a video, participate in a longer training event, or attend an information session being offered through a televised distance education mode of delivery.)

3. If a televised distance education course was offered would you be interested in participating? What would make it more likely for you to be able to participate? What would prevent you from participating?

4. Are we on track with this type of educational programming? Explain.

5. During our discussions have any new ideas come to you or insights occurred, and if so, would you please share them?

2c. FOCUS GROUP CONSENT FORM

I _____ voluntarily agree to participate in the ***Educational Needs And Interests Of Seniors And Professionals In Relation To Abuse And Mistreatment Of Older Adults Focus Group***, dated _____, 1995 as described to me in the introduction.

I understand that the focus group is being conducted by the Seniors' Education Centre (SEC), University Extension, University of Regina, which will assist SEC to determine some of the learning needs, interests, and educational resources of seniors, volunteers and professionals in relation to the prevention of abuse of older adults.

I understand that the information and insights that I offer will be summarized in a final report which will assure the anonymity of my responses. The anonymity and confidentiality of the responses will be protected within legally acceptable limits. The raw data will be kept on file at the University of Regina. I also understand that I will receive no direct or indirect benefits from participating in this focus group study.

I understand that it will take approximately 2 hours of my time to participate in the focus group. I am aware that I am not obligated to participate in this focus group and may withdraw at any time during the discussions. Finally, I acknowledge that I can seek further information about this study by contacting the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research at the University of Regina at 585-4161.

_____ _____

SIGNATURE ADDRESS

_____

DATE

CONTACT PERSON: Darla Goettler, Project Coordinator
Prevention Education Project (Senior Abuse)
Seniors' Education Centre, University Extension,
University of Regina
Room 106 Gallery Building
College Ave. and Cornwall St.
Regina, Sask. S4S 0A2
Phone: (306) 585-5706; Fax: (306) 585-5825

3. KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

3a. INTRODUCTION

I am calling on behalf of the Seniors' Education Centre, University Extension, University of Regina. I am conducting project research into the educational needs, interests, and resources in Saskatchewan in relation to the abuse and mistreatment of older adults. I am contacting people who have participated or are participating in activities related to the prevention of abuse and mistreatment of seniors in order to get a better understanding of what would be the best prevention education approach.

Your participation in the telephone survey and your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous. The anonymity and confidentiality of the responses will be protected within legally acceptable limits. *(Should someone ask to have the limits defined say "Because we are dealing with the subject of senior abuse I (the interviewer) am obligated to report criminal activity which places an individual in immediate life threatening danger").* General responses will be included in a summary report, however, names and direct quotations will not. Also, while we hope to develop new programs in this area we can not promise you any direct or indirect benefits from participating in this study.

It will take approximately 30 minutes of your time to participate in this interview. You are also not obligated to participate and may withdraw at any time during our discussion. You also have the right to seek further information about this study by contacting the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research at the University of Regina at 585-4161.

I understand that you have been involved in prevention/education/intervention activities. Would you be willing to participate in this interview and tell me about your work in this area and discuss prevention education possibilities? If so, is now a good time for this discussion?

3b. KEY INFORMANT QUESTIONS

1. From your experience/perspective is more education and information-sharing needed in the area of abuse and mistreatment of older adults?

2. What type of learning/educational opportunities would be most useful for you?

3. Would televised distance education be a useful way to share this educational information with people? Why or why not? (GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT IS POSSIBLE WITH TELEVISED DISTANCE EDUCATION)

4. Any other comments or ideas?

5. Is there someone else you would recommend I speak with?